

The Black Death

The Black Death was a very contagious disease that killed between 75 and 200 million people in the Middle Ages between 1347 and 1350. It got its name because of the blue and black blotches that would appear all over the body of someone who had been infected. So many people died, and so quickly, that they could not be buried in the customary way. Instead, many victims of the Black Death were buried in enormous pits which served as mass graves.



The disease is believed to have started in Asia, and we now know that it was carried by the fleas on rats, but people at the time did not know what caused the disease. Cities, which were crowded and dirty and attracted rats, were especially dangerous places. It was not uncommon for the entire population of a place to be wiped out by the plague.

Not surprisingly, there was a great deal of panic during the time. People tried to avoid becoming sick. Some stayed indoors. Sometimes they burned down houses or towns where the disease had appeared, hoping to stop its spread. But since rats, and the fleas that lived on them, were so widespread, it was very nearly impossible to avoid the flea bites that spread the illness.

Today, the Black Death is known as the bubonic plague. Instances of it are extremely rare, and it can now be effectively treated, so contracting it is no longer means certain death as it did in the Middle Ages.

By the time the Black Death had run its course, a great deal of the infrastructure in Europe was gone. Historians estimate that it took about 150 years for Europe to completely rebuild and recover from the devastating effects of the disease. The extreme loss of life, especially the lives of serfs, was also one of the main reasons that feudalism eventually declined.

Name _____ **Feudalism**

QUESTIONS: The Black Death

Circle the correct answer.

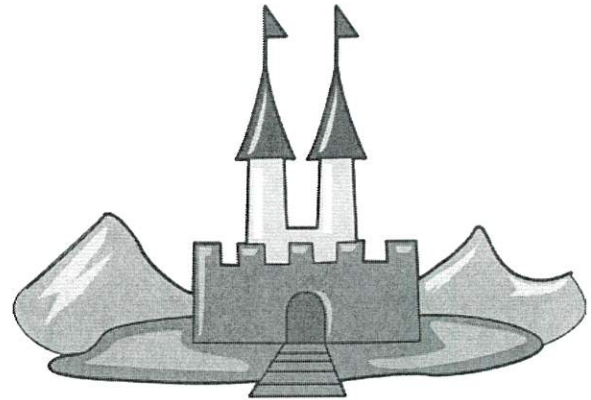
1. The Black Death was:
 - A. a devastating disease that killed many during the Middle Ages
 - B. pits dug as mass graves
 - C. blue and black splotches on people's skin
 - D. all of the above
2. The Black Death spread through:
 - A. personal contact
 - B. air
 - C. fleas on rats
 - D. infected water
3. Today, the Black Death is known as:
 - A. AIDS
 - B. SARS
 - C. the bubonic plague
 - D. the swine flu
4. In order to try to avoid contracting the Black Death, people:
 - A. shut themselves in their houses
 - B. burned down houses where people had been sick
 - C. burned down towns where many people had been sick
 - D. all of the above
5. The biggest effect of the Black Death was:
 - A. loss of infrastructure in Europe
 - B. loss of life in Europe
 - C. loss of rats in Europe
 - D. A and B

The Feudal System

Feudalism was the social structure and style of government in Europe during the middle ages. It lasted for about a thousand years, beginning with the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 and ending in the mid 14th century at the dawn of the modern age. The social hierarchy during the time of feudalism was as follows.

The Bishop was the highest-ranking church official in a kingdom. The area managed by a Bishop was called a diocese. Bishops, like the Catholic Church, were very powerful in Medieval Europe. The church received a tithe (a tax to support the church and clergy) of 10% of what everyone in the kingdom produced.

The king was the highest authority in the land. He divided the land up among the Barons and high-ranking nobles, who in turn gave their loyalty and provided soldiers for the king. The large area of land ruled by a Baron was called a fief. Each Baron divided their fief among the lords. All the lords served the king, and some of the lords were also the king's knights. They paid taxes to the king, and provided him with soldiers.



Communities formed around each lord. The lord lived in a manor, which was a large house or castle. Each manor was surrounded by a small village that included a church. Surrounding the village were the farms. The serfs (peasants) who lived on the land worked on the land for the lord. In return, the lord was responsible for the safety of the serfs. The lords owned everything on their land, including the many of serfs, who worked on the land like slaves. Around 90 percent of the people of the time fell into this category. Other serfs were free, and able to own businesses. These serfs made up the tradesmen, like carpenters, bakers, and blacksmiths. Life expectancy for a serf was less than thirty years.

Name _____ **Feudalism**

QUESTIONS: The Feudal System

Circle the correct answer.

1. What period of history preceded feudalism?
A. the modern age
B. the Roman Empire
C. the Middle Ages
D. None of the above

2. Who was the highest ranking church official in a kingdom?
A. the lord
B. the fief
C. the bishop
D. the king

3. The king divided his land up among:
A. the lords
B. the fiefs
C. the Barons
D. the serfs

4. The Barons divided their land up among:
A. the lords
B. the fiefs
C. the peasants
D. the serfs

5. Most of the people in the feudal system were in what role?
A. lords
B. fiefs
C. Barons
D. serfs

6. A tithe is a:
A. tax
B. knight
C. kingdom
D. tradesman

Daily Life in Feudal Society

During the Middle Ages, most people were serfs (peasants) who lived and worked on a lord's manor in exchange for his protection. The life of most serfs was hard, and religion played a huge role.

Serfs worked hard. In the country, they worked on farms or in gardens. In the city, many serfs worked as craftsmen. Some serfs worked as servants, merchants, bakers, doctors, and lawyers.

Serfs lived in very small houses and often in crowded conditions. Everyone slept in the same room, and sometimes there were even animals in the house. Houses were dark, often smoky from the fires kept burning for cooking and for warmth, and uncomfortable.

Clothing in the Middle Ages differed depending on what social class a person was in. Sumptuary laws (laws limiting private expenditure on food and personal items) dictated what a person could wear or use. Clothing for serfs was made from wool. Men wore long tops called tunics, stockings, breeches, and cloaks. Women wore long skirts called kirtles, aprons, woolen stockings, and cloaks. Clothing for the wealthy was made from a much finer quality of wool, and even velvet and silk.

For most people in the middle ages, food was basic, and much the same, day to day. Serfs ate bread and stews made mostly of vegetables with a little meat. Meat, cheese, and eggs were eaten primarily on special occasions. The diet of wealthy nobles had more variety, and included much more meat and sweet puddings. Because water quality at the time was poor and inconsistent, most people drank ale or wine.

Very few children went to school. Some boys were apprenticed at a young age to learn craft. The wealthy often hired tutors to teach their children. Arranged marriages were common, especially for nobles, with girls often marrying at twelve and boys at fourteen.

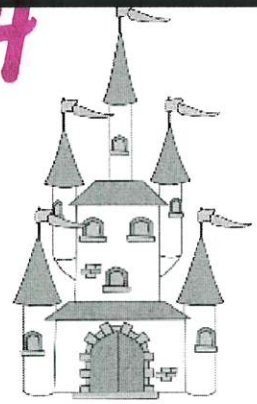


Name _____ **Feudalism**

QUESTIONS: Daily Life in Feudal Society

1. What role did most people occupy in society during the Middle Ages?
2. What kind of work did serfs do?
3. Describe the home conditions of the average serf.
4. What were Sumptuary Laws?
5. How did the clothing of serfs and nobles differ?
6. What did people eat during the Middle Ages?
7. Why was ale and wine frequently drunk during the Middle Ages?
8. What was the education of children like during the Middle Ages?

Castles



Feudalism was a social and governmental structure in which power was spread out amongst different lords, who each had control over a certain area of land. These different lords did not always agree, and wars between them were not uncommon. To protect themselves, they would build large, strong compounds called castles to live in. Castles were often built on hills, or in such a way that used the natural features of the landscape to its advantage. They were difficult for enemies to access and ideal places from which to defend against attacks.

The first castles were made of wood. Later, stone was added to make them stronger. Although each castle was different, they did share many common features. They consisted of multiple buildings, with the lords living in the main, central building. There was a dungeon where prisoners were kept. The keep was a large, fortified tower, a self-sufficient structure to which the castle residents could retreat as a last resort during a battle. The area around the keep was called the "bailey." In the bailey were smaller buildings for storing food and housing soldiers. There were also workshops and even a chapel. Surrounding it all was the "curtain wall," a high wall with a walkway on it which could be used to launch defensive attacks. These walls usually also contained arrow slits through which an archer could fire arrows from behind the wall. Some castles had a deep ditch called a moat dug around it. This was usually filled with water, and a drawbridge was used to cross it when coming and going from the castle. At the entrance to the castle was a gatehouse, where guards were stationed to provide extra defense at the castle's weakest point.

When castles were attacked, enemies used heavy-duty tools like the battering ram and the catapult. More often, attackers would conduct a siege, meaning they would prevent anyone from entering or leaving the castle in an attempt to starve its inhabitants.

Name _____ **Feudalism**

QUESTIONS: Castles

1. Define feudalism.

2. Why did people build castles?

3. What common features did many castles share?

4. How were castles usually attacked?

5. What was a siege?

Fiefs

Feudalism was the social structure and style of government in Europe during the Middle Ages. Under feudalism, land was divided up into parcels called fiefs. More than just the land itself, a fief included a manor house or castle for the noble, and at least one small village for the serfs to live. A serf was a peasant farmer who worked on the noble's land. In exchange for their work, serfs were allowed to also work part of their master's land in order to generate food for themselves.

The master who lived in the manor did not own the fief. All fiefs were ultimately owned by the king, and were granted for only as long as the king wanted him to have it. The king could take the fief back at any time. There were multiple levels of fiefdom. The king might grant a fief to a lord, who might then grant fiefs to vassals, who might then grant a fief to someone who had become a vassal to him. Fiefs were sometimes given to knights as a reward for exemplary military service.



The granting of fief required a formal ceremony. The recipient would kneel before the overlord (the person granting the fief) and declare himself as the overlord's man, thus declaring his loyalty to the overlord. The overlord would kiss the recipient, and raise him to his feet. The recipient would then swear an oath of fealty (loyalty) to the overlord, which bound him to perform acts and services for the overlord when required. These acts and services could include fighting for the overlord or sending men to fight for him if needed, or providing ransom money if the overlord was captured. The recipient also promised to take care of the serfs who would work the land.

When this system first began, a fief would have to be renewed when either the overlord or the recipient of his fief died. However, eventually it became customary for the recipient's heir to take possession of the fief, and over time, fiefdoms became hereditary.

QUESTIONS: Fiefs

Circle the correct answer.

1. A fief was:
 - A. a parcel of land
 - B. a manor house or a castle for a noble
 - C. a village where serfs lived
 - D. a parcel of land that also included B and C

2. Who actually owned a fief?
 - A. the master who lived in the house
 - B. the serfs who worked the land
 - C. the king
 - D. none of the above

3. A vassal was someone who:
 - A. granted fiefs to lords
 - B. served a lord or another vassal in exchange for a fief
 - C. was in the social class just above the serfs
 - D. served in the military

4. The granting of a fief required:
 - A. a formal ceremony
 - B. heredity
 - C. a knight and a vassal
 - D. the presence of the king

5. Acts of services performed for an overlord in exchange for a fief included:
 - A. military service
 - B. providing ransom money
 - C. taking care of the serfs on the fief
 - D. all of the above
 - E. none of the above

Feudalism in Japan

Feudalism was the dominant social and political organization in Japan from 1185 to 1868. Although there was an emperor in Japan during this time, following a civil war in 1336, he no longer had any real power at all. When the civil war was over, the emperor gave the title of Shogun to the leader of each Samurai army who had fought for him, in order to prevent them from deposing him as emperor. This ushered in a new kind of social structure in Japan, with powerful families (daimyo) and the Shogun controlling smaller areas of land, instead of the emperor controlling everything. As in Medieval Europe, these wealthy landholders divided up their land into smaller areas and the peasants (serfs) who lived there worked the land and served as soldiers when called upon.



The various Shogun did not always have the same interests, and they sometimes fought one another in civil wars. In 1543 a Portuguese ship landed in Japan. It was the first time the Japanese had ever seen European people, and the Portuguese introduced the Japanese to many things they had never seen before, like guns. The introduction of guns changed Japanese society, and threatened the power of the Samurai, who traditionally fought with swords. The attempted spread of Christianity to Japan also weakened the power of the daimyo and Shoguns. The emperor hoped to regain power during this time, but in 1600 the Tokugawa family Shogun rose to power, and ruled for the rest of Japan's feudal period. They forced the foreigners to leave Japan and persecuted peasants who had converted to Christianity. In an attempt to restore Japanese tradition, they instituted a government policy of isolation from the rest of the world, called Sakoku. During this time, foreigners were prevented from entering Japan and Japanese trying to leave the country were put to death. The Tokugawa Shogun remained in power until the end of Japanese feudalism in 1868.

Name _____ **Feudalism**

QUESTIONS: Feudalism in Japan

Circle the correct answer.

1. What was a Shogun?
 - A. the emperor in Japan
 - B. the leader of each Samurai army who had fought for the emperor
 - C. a powerful Japanese family
 - D. a peasant who worked the land

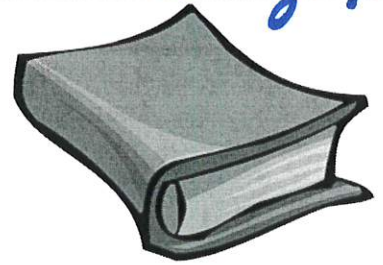
2. Portuguese traders introduced what to Japan in 1543?
 - A. Samurai
 - B. the feudal system
 - C. swords
 - D. guns

3. What changed Japanese society and threatened the power of the Samurai?
 - A. the introduction of European people
 - B. the introduction of guns
 - C. the introduction of European feudalism
 - D. the introduction of Christianity

4. Who were the last Shogun in Japan?
 - A. Tokugawa family
 - B. Sakoku family
 - C. the Portuguese
 - D. the samurai

5. The Japanese government's policy of isolation was called:
 - A. Tokugawa
 - B. Sakoku
 - C. Shogun
 - D. Samurai

Name _____ The Holocaust



Anne Frank

Anne Frank was a German Jewish girl who is famous for the diary that she kept while her family hid from the Nazis during World War II. Anne lived in the Netherlands, and she was ten years old at the start of the war, when the Nazis began establishing and enforcing rules about what Jewish people could and could not do. Schools and businesses were segregated. Anne's family made multiple efforts to leave the Netherlands during this time, but all of their efforts were unsuccessful.

The Nazis were systematically moving Jewish people into concentration camps all across Europe. These were like prison camps where people did hard labor. Anyone unable to work was killed. Many people also died in concentration camps of illness or starvation. Anne's mother was the first in the family to be notified that she was to report to a German "work camp." Instead of complying, the family decided that they would go into hiding. They were joined by another family, the Van Pels, and a man named Fritz Pfeffer. The hiding space was a secret apartment hidden behind a bookcase in an office owned by Anne's father, Otto Frank. While the company continued to do business at the front of the building, Anne and the others had to be quiet all day. The people who worked in the office brought them the food and clothes that they needed and books to help pass the time. They also carried messages between the hideaways and the outside world.

Anne and her family hid there for almost two years, during which time Anne kept a diary, which she later decided to turn into a book. She called her story *The Secret Annex*. However, the hiding place was discovered, and its residents were sent to Auschwitz. Anne's father was the only one of them to survive the way. Anne and her sister died of disease and malnutrition in Bergen-Belsen. When some friends gave Anne's diary to her father, Otto Frank, he had 3,000 copies of her diary published as a novel called *The Secret Annex*. The book is one of the most personal and poignant accounts of the holocaust and is still widely read today.

Name _____ **The Holocaust**

QUESTIONS: Anne Frank

1. Who was Anne Frank?
2. What were the Nazis doing when Anne was a child?
3. What was a concentration camp?
4. Who was the first in the family to be notified she was to report to a "work camp?"
5. What did Anne's family decide to do?
6. Describe where Anne's family spent years of their life during World War II and what life was like for them.
7. For how long did Anne keep a diary?
8. Who was the only member of Anne's family to survive World War II?

Adolf Hitler

Adolf Hitler is the most well-known figure in World War II history. He rose to a disturbing level of power in Germany, leading the country from 1933 to 1945, eventually as a dictator. It was Hitler's invasion of Poland that started World War II, during which Germany invaded many other countries in Europe. Hitler was also the mastermind behind the Holocaust, a period of time during World War II when the Nazis murdered approximately seventeen million people. Hitler and the Nazis targeted Jewish people, Polish people, Catholics, Serbs, and the handicapped, including children.

Hitler was born in Austria. His parents died young, and many of his brothers and sisters died in childhood. As a boy, he was expelled from several schools. Eventually he moved to Vienna, Austria, where he hoped to become an artist. However, he was not very talented and struggled to make a living. From there, he moved to Munich, Germany, intending to become an architect. When World War I began, he joined the German army, where he was an excellent soldier. Twice he was awarded the Iron Cross for bravery. Hitler came to love both Germany and war during this time.



When the war ended, Hitler went into politics. It was a time when the German people were unhappy about losing the war. They were also upset with the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, which blamed the war on Germany and punished the country by taking some of its land away. The German economy was also in shambles. It was an opportune time for a charismatic leader who proposed to solve these problems to rise to power. Hitler was a very powerful speaker, and the German people believed that he would be able to lead their country to greatness. He was elected Chancellor in 1933. Hitler was a great admirer of the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, and he followed Mussolini's example in installing a fascist government in Germany. Hitler's goals throughout World War II were to expand Germany and to purify the German race.

QUESTIONS: Adolf Hitler

Circle the correct answer.

1. Adolf Hitler is the most well-known figure in:
 - A. World War I history
 - B. Austria
 - C. Germany
 - D. Europe

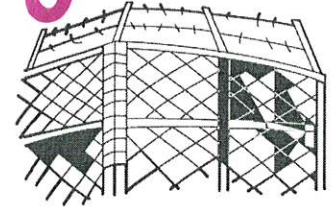
2. What event started World War II?
 - A. Hitler's invasion of Poland
 - B. Hitler's targeting of the Jewish people
 - C. Hitler's invasion of Europe
 - D. the Holocaust

3. Which country was Adolf Hitler from?
 - A. Germany
 - B. Poland
 - C. Austria
 - D. Italy

4. What did Adolf Hitler hope to be when he was young?
 - A. a dictator
 - B. a politician
 - C. an architect
 - D. an artist

5. Which of the following is NOT a reason that Hitler rose to power in Germany?
 - A. the German people were unhappy about losing the war
 - B. the German people were upset with the terms of the Treaty of Versailles
 - C. the German economy was in shambles
 - D. Hitler was shy and rarely made speeches

Types of Concentration Camps



A concentration camp is a place where many people are gathered together (concentrated) and kept prisoner.

People in concentration camps are usually forced to do labor. Living conditions are usually poor. The Nazis began using concentration camps in Nazi Germany in 1933. Between 1938 and 1945, they established camps all over Europe as a way to control and shape the population of what they expected would become the Nazi empire. Their goal was to get rid of the "degenerate" (corrupt and impure) races, primarily the Jewish people and Roma (gypsies). Though we tend to think of all Nazi camps as concentration camps, there were actually five types of camps with five distinct purposes.

The purpose of the concentration camps was to keep prisoners in one place. The Nazis did not care about the health or well-being of the prisoners in these camps and many died there of starvation or malnutrition. People remained in concentrations camps for anywhere from a few days to a few years.

Extermination camps were used to kill "undesirable" people on a mass scale, usually using gas (carbon monoxide) The first extermination camp, Chelmno, was built in 1941. In all, there were six extermination camps, all in Poland. Auschwitz-Birkenau is the most well-known. Later camps were located near railway lines to make it easier to transport people.

Extermination camps also had crematoria, where the dead bodies were burned. More than three million people were murdered in extermination camps during World War II.

Transit camps were used to hold prisoners for short periods of time before they were moved to other Nazi camps. At forced labor camps people were forced to do heavy labor. Many people died in labor camps from the poor conditions. The Nazis kept military personnel and others that they captured during the war in prisoner of war camps.

QUESTIONS: Types of Concentration Camps

Circle the correct answer.

1. Which of the following is NOT characteristic of a concentration camp?
 - A. people being kept prisoner
 - B. people being crowded together
 - C. freedom to come and go
 - D. unsanitary conditions
2. When did the Nazis begin using concentration camps in Germany?
 - A. 1933
 - B. 1938
 - C. 1941
 - D. 1945
3. What was the purpose of concentration camps?
 - A. to get rid of the "degenerate" (corrupt and impure) races,
 - B. to keep prisoners in one place
 - C. to kill undesirable people
 - D. to hold prisoners for short periods of time
4. What kind of camps were used to hold prisoners for short periods of time?
 - A. concentration camps
 - B. forced labor camps
 - C. extermination camps
 - D. transit camps
5. What kind of camps were used to kill "undesirable" people on a mass scale?
 - A. concentration camps
 - B. forced labor camps
 - C. extermination camps
 - D. transit camps

Roman Engineering

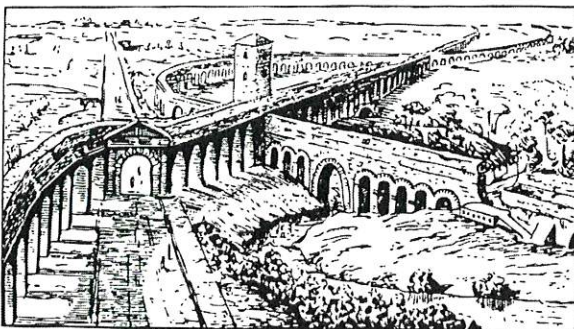
Romans built roads, arches, aqueducts and bridges. They also invented concrete which was used in many of their building projects.

Roads allowed goods and services to be transported between towns and cities. Roads also made it easier to move soldiers and supplies as the empire expanded. Roads were built with concrete, which was a Roman invention. Mixing lime and volcanic sand made a strong, durable material that dried solid and which was capable of supporting a great deal of weight. Roads were slightly humped in the middle so that rain would flow down to the sides of the roads, preventing flooding.

An arch is a curved, symmetrical structure made of brick, stone, or concrete. Most arches are composed of wedge shaped blocks supported by a wooden frame. When the top center stone, called the keystone, is inserted, the wooden scaffolding can be removed and both sides of the arch apply equal pressure to the keystone, allowing it to stand. Though the arch was not invented by the Romans, they did figure out how to increase the amount of weight it could support.

Aqueducts were long channels, usually underground, that were built to enable the supply of water into cities. This water was used for drinking, public baths, and sewers. Though the homes of some wealthy people had running water, most Romans would bring their own buckets to a public place, like a fountain, to get the water they needed.

Bridges were built with stone and concrete, and arches were used to make them strong. The largest bridge built by ancient Romans was Trajan bridge over the river Danube, and it was over 3700 feet long and 62 feet high. Over 900 bridges were built in the Roman empire.



Name _____ **Ancient Rome**

QUESTIONS: Roman Engineering

Circle the correct answer.

1. The Romans invented:
A. the arch
B. bridges
C. concrete
D. roads

2. Roads were _____ to prevent flooding.
A. made from concrete
B. capable of supporting a lot of weight
C. symmetrical in structure
D. slightly humped in the middle

3. Romans:
A. figured out how to increase the amount of weight an arch could support
B. invented the arch
C. had no running water
D. seldom built bridges

4. Aqueducts were used to:
A. carry water
B. strengthen bridges and buildings
C. prevent flooding
D. allow Romans to cross bodies of water

5. The top center stone of an arch is called the:
A. Danube
B. keystone
C. aqueduct
D. concrete

Julius Caesar

Gaius Julius Caesar was born in 100 BC to an aristocratic family. He had a private tutor and learned to read and write. He also studied law and the art of oratory (speaking in public). His father died when Caesar was sixteen, leaving him as head of the family. A year later, Caesar married Cornelia, whose father was a powerful Roman politician.

At that time, the Roman dictator Sulla was enemies with several members of Caesar's family, and he joined the army and left the city to avoid Sulla and his allies. He returned a military hero following Sulla's death, and quickly gained power and allies in the Roman government.

Caesar, Pompey the Great, and Marcus Licinius Crassus consolidated their political power and formed what became known as the first triumvirate. Together, they largely ruled Rome, and it was their influence that helped Caesar get elected to consul, the highest-ranking position in the Roman Republic.



After his one-year term, he became governor of the province of Gaul. His political and military success there made him the equal of Pompey in the eyes of Rome and they became rivals. Caesar wanted to return to Rome and run for consul again, but refused to first give up his army. Instead, he marched his army to Rome and took control. Caesar defeated Pompey and became Dictator of Rome. Among other things, he instituted the Julian calendar, with 365 days and a leap year, which we still use today.

But many feared that under Julius' reign the Roman Republic would fall, and he was assassinated on March 15, 44 BC, forever known as the ides of March. The plot was led by Brutus and Cassius, and Julius was stabbed 23 times. His death was a turning point in history not just for Rome, but for the entire Western world, as it ushered in the 1,500 year Roman Empire.

Name _____ **Ancient Rome**

QUESTIONS: Julius Caesar

Circle the correct answer.

1. Julius Caesar was a _____ in ancient Rome.
 - A. Emperor
 - B. Dictator
 - C. Triumvirate
 - D. none of the above
2. Co-rule by Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus was called:
 - A. the Roman Republic
 - B. the First Triumvirate
 - C. the Second Triumvirate
 - D. the Roman Empire
3. The highest-ranking position in the Roman Republic was:
 - A. Triumvirate
 - B. Dictator
 - C. Senator
 - D. consul
4. Caesar instituted the _____ that we still use today.
 - A. system of government
 - B. methods of political influence
 - C. aqueducts
 - D. calendar
5. Why was Julius Caesar assassinated?
 - A. Out of fear his dictatorship would ruin the Republic
 - B. because he was Pompey's enemy
 - C. in retaliation for defeating the Gauls
 - D. Crassus was jealous of him